ed States Department
Agriculture
Office of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20250

News Releases and other News Material

Number 7493 July 19 - July 23, 1993

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For further information about this booklet contact Charles Hobbs, editor, News Division, Office of Public Affairs, Room 406-A, U.S Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-4026.

News Releases-

Release No. 0588.93
Mary Dixon (202) 720-4623

ESPY ENCOURAGES ELECTRONIC ISSUANCE OF FOOD STAMPS BY ALL STATES

Study Shows Electronic Method Can Reduce Costs and Fraud

WASHINGTON, July 19--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy, who is encouraging all states to switch to electronic issuance of food stamp benefits instead of paper coupons, today released a study showing that the electronic method can cut costs and fraud.

Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Food and Consumer Services Ellen Haas announced the release of the report during a news conference today in Albuquerque, N.M.

"The results of our study on electronic issuance of food stamp benefits in New Mexico and Minnesota show that we clearly need to take advantage of basic technology and cooperation between government and the private sector to improve the food stamp program," said Espy. "It also helps the recipient by getting rid of the stigma associated with printed food stamp coupons."

The electronic issuance of food stamps, also known as electronic benefits transfer (EBT), eliminates the use of paper coupons and provides recipients with a plastic card and a personal identification number that functions much like a money-machine card, except it is used to purchase food. No money is exchanged and the recipient's food stamp account is debited as purchases are made.

"We know how to cut costs, red tape and fraud so we must move in that direction," said Espy. "The EBT system is good for the recipient, the merchant and the taxpayer. That's what President Clinton and Vice President Gore mean when they refer to reinventing government.

"Currently, we print more than 2.5 billion food stamp coupons a year. When we move to EBT, we cut down on printing all those coupons, counting all those coupons and destroying all those coupons. It costs more than $22 million to count, shred and burn them."

At her news conference today in Albuquerque, Haas outlined the savings achieved in two EBT programs. The programs are operated in New Mexico in Bernalillo County (Albuquerque) and in Minnesota in Ramsey County (St. Paul). Also during the news conference, Haas announced that New Mexico was going statewide with its EBT efforts.

Only the state of Maryland now has a complete statewide EBT system.

"We are now certain that we have a system that eliminates many bar-riers," said Haas. "We are reinventing the food stamp program with a system that makes smarter investments with existing resources."

Government issuance costs dropped 24 percent in the New Mexico project and three percent in Minnesota, the study showed. Further, the study showed that costs to retailers dropped by $3.98 per $1,000 in benefits in New Mexico and by $9.09 in Minnesota. The estimated loss and fraud of food stamp benefits dropped by 75 percent in New Mexico and 81 percent in Minnesota.

Other findings in the USDA report, titled "The Impacts of the State-Initiated EBT Demonstrations on the Food Stamp Program":

--Recipients strongly preferred the EBT system in both sites because the systems were easier, more convenient and safer to use than coupons.

--Banks strongly preferred the EBT system because of reduced costs.

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Release No. 0589.93
Sally Klusaritz (202) 720-3448
Arthur Whitmore (202) 720-4026

U.S. TO DONATE AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES FOR USE IN ARMENIA

WASHINGTON, July 19--The United States will donate $24 million worth of U.S. dairy products for use in Armenia, according to Christopher E. Goldthwait, acting general sales manager for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service.

The donation of 5,000 tons of whole dry milk and 5,000 tons of nonfat dry milk will be handled by the Diocesan Fund for Armenia's Recovery, a private U.S. voluntary organization which will distribute the products to Armenian pensioners, lactating mothers and families with young children. The food distribution program will be channeled through state stores that are set up to ration food to recipients.

The donation will be made under the Food For Progress program, which is administered by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. The supply period for this donation is fiscal 1993.

For more information, contact James F. Keefer, FAS (202) 720-5263.

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Release No. 0590.93
Sally Klusaritz (202) 720-3448
Arthur Whitmore (202) 720-4026

U.S. TO DONATE AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES FOR USE IN RUSSIA

WASHINGTON, July 19--The United States will donate $13 million worth of U.S. agricultural commodities for use in Russia, according to Christopher E. Goldthwait, acting general sales manager for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service.

International Orthodox Christian Charities, a private U.S. voluntary organization, will distribute the donated commodities to pensioners, invalids, single mothers, young children, discharged veterans and the homeless in Russia. The donation totals 10,700 metric tons of commodities, including 2,500 tons of vegetable oil, 1,700 tons of whole dry milk, 3,000 tons of rice, 1,000 tons of lentils, 2,200 tons of butteroil and 300 tons of infant formula.

The donation will be made under the Food for Progress program and Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949. The programs are administered by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service.

The supply period of the donation is fiscal 1993.

For more information, contact James F. Keefer, FAS, (202) 720-5263.

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Release No. 0591.93
Kim Kaplan (301) 344-2446

HONEY BEES INVOLVED IN DEATH CONFIRMED AS AFRICANIZED; SECOND SWARM IN ARIZONA ALSO CONFIRMED

WASHINGTON, July 19--Bees involved in the death of an elderly Texas man last Thursday were officially identified as Africanized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A second swarm found near Sasabe, Arizona, was also confirmed as Africanized.

USDA's Agricultural Research Service's Bee Research Laboratory in Beltsville, Md., confirmed on Saturday, July 17, samples taken from a honey bee nest from the walls of a vacant house on a ranch 30 miles north of Rio Grande City were Africanized. ARS is a major scientific agency of the USDA.

According to the Starr County sheriff's report, Lino Lopez 82, was trying to kill the bees' nest with a burning sack. He was stung about the head, chest and neck, the report said. Relatives took the man to Starr County Memorial Hospital in Rio Grande City, where he was pronounced dead at 2:50 p.m.

The patholigist who performed an autopsy on the dead man indicated the cause of death was acute pulmonary edema; his lungs filled with fluid as an adverse reaction to the multiple bee stingings.

This is the first death attributed to Africanized honey bees in the United States.

A second honey bee swarm found in an Arizona trap line was also confirmed Saturday as Africanized. This swarm was in a trap line five miles north of Sasabe in Pima County, not far from where the first Africanized honey bee swarm in Arizona was captured on July 9.

The first Africanized honey bee swarm to migrate into the United States from Mexico was identified in Hidalgo, Texas, in October 1990. They have now been found in 58 southern Texas counties and in Arizona just over the border with Mexico.

Africanized honey bees look like the European-descended honey bees commonly found in the United States, but they react more aggressively when defending their nests. A single bee sting from an Africanized honey bee is essentially identical to that of the more common European honey bee.

USDA is assisting states along the Mexican border in conducting educational campaigns for specialized audiences and the general public as well as helping to set up monitoring traplines.

Honeybees generally sting when their nests are threatened. On average, AHBs are likely to sting in greater numbers and will pursue intruders further than other honeybees. Vibrations from motors such as those on power lawn mowers and bushwackers particularly seem to disturb honeybees. Studies have shown that the stinging response of AHBs is about ten times greater than that of other honey bees. But all honeybees should be treated with caution.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For details of USDA programs, contact Kim Kaplan, Information Office, ARS-USDA, Room 448, 6303 Ivy Lane, Greenbelt, Md. 20770, telephone (301) 344-2446. For Texas programs, contact Kathleen Davis, Agricultural Communications, Texas A&M, telephone (409) 845-2872. For Arizona programs, call Suzanne Sorich, Arizona Department of Agriculture, telephone (602) 542-0951.

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Release No. 0592.93
Linda Cooke (309) 681-6530
Carol Childers (202) 720-9120

BEETLE DRAFTED TO FIGHT DISEASE IT SPREADS

WASHINGTON, July 20--A dark brown, hairy insect called the dusky sap beetle has been tricked into protecting the ears of corn it likes to eat.

U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists say they have worked out a way to enable the beetles carry to corn fields the natural enemies of fungi that cause aflatoxin in corn. If infected with high levels of aflatoxin, corn cannot be fed to livestock.

Dusky sap beetles enter corn through wounds caused by corn earworms or European corn borers, or through gaps in the corn husk. According to scientists, as the beetles feed on the corn they spread spores of the aflatoxin-producing fungi.

Now entomologists Fernando E. Vega and Patrick F. Dowd of USDA's Agricultural Research Service have invented a biological delivery system that, in effect, turns the quarter-inch beetle from villain to hero.

If the beetle spreads aflatoxin-causing fungi as it roams corn fields, reasoned the scientists, why not have it also carry a natural weapon against aflatoxin? One candidate is Bacillus subtilis, a foe of the fungi Aspergillus flavus and A. parasiticus that give rise to aflatoxin in corn.

"It's costly to control sap beetles in corn because it takes several applications of insecticides at the right time," said Vega. He and Dowd may apply for a patent on the biocontrol device--an alternative to insecticides.

Dowd said a similar sap beetle delivery system could be used to combat plant pathogens the beetle spreads to peaches, nectarines, dates and figs. Vega and Dowd worked two years at ARS' National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research in Peoria, Ill., to design and test a bacterium dispenser that

is attached to a baited trap. ARS entomologist Robert J. Bartelt at the center extracted attractants, known as pheromones, from the beetle and synthesized them. The pheromones, combined with artificial corn odors, act as the trap's bait.

Drawn by the enticing aromas, beetles enter the T-shaped plastic trap and crawl into a container, where their hairy bodies pick up microorganisms such as B. subtilis that have been placed there. Upon recognizing they are trapped, the beetles panic, exit the device, and are off to the corn fields to spread the biocontrol as they feed.

In field tests last summer, blue dye was placed in a dozen of the devices on a 40-acre University of Illinois research farm near Havana, Ill. The beetles that passed through the devices spread the dye to as much as 58 percent of nearby wounded corn ears. Dowd said 10 to 20 percent of sap beetles in the area went through the devices. This amount is adequate to move the material around in the field, but the scientists are working to find ways to increase the percent of the population that enters the device.

To eliminate the problem of the beetles themselves, Dowd and Vega said a sap beetle pathogen could be added to the device just before the beetles begin moving to hibernation sites after the corn-growing season. The pathogen would not harm corn or other plants and animals, but it would kill the sap beetles after they gather to hibernate.

This summer, Vega and Dowd will artificially infect field corn with A. flavus and possibly other toxin-producing fungi, such as Fusarium moniliforme. Sap beetles will carry a commercial formulation of B. subtilis to the corn. The researchers will measure fungal infestation and aflatoxin levels in the corn to check the effectiveness of the biocontrol cts that carry pathogens to weeds on which the insects feed.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For details contact Patrick F. Dowd or Fernando E. Vega, National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, Peoria, Ill. 61604. Telephone: (309) 685-4011.

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Release No. 0593.93
Robert Feist (202) 720-6789
Charles Hobbs (202) 720-4026

USDA RELEASES SWEETENER MARKET DATA REPORT FOR APRIL 1993

WASHINGTON, July 20--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation today released its Sweetener Market Data Report for April 1993.

Report totals, in short tons (2,000 pounds), include:

-- April 1, 1993 beginning sugar stocks - 3,903,897.
-- U.S. beet sugar production for April 1993 - 210,502.
-- U.S. cane sugar production for April 1993 - 103,943.
-- Deliveries for April 1993 - 694,511, including deliveries for domestic human consumption - 685,851.
-- April 30, 1993 ending sugar stocks - 3,718,830.

Copies of the July 13, 1993 Sweetener Market Data report for April data are available from the Sweeteners Analysis Division, ASCS/USDA, Room 3727-S, P.O. Box 2415, Washington, D.C. 20013; telephone (202) 720-3391; FAX (202) 720-8261.

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Release No. 0595.93
Sally Klusaritz (202) 720-3448
Diane O'Connor (202) 720-4026

USDA ANNOUNCES 1993/94 EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PACKAGE FOR WHEAT FLOUR

WASHINGTON, July 20--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today announced a 1.745 million metric ton, multi-country package of initiatives under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program to boost sales of U.S. wheat flour during the 1993/94 international marketing year.

"This EEP package of wheat flour is an important element in maintaining U.S. wheat flour exports in the face of subsidized competition by other exporters," Espy said.

The package of initiatives announced today, in metric tons, includes:

Country or Region	Metric Tons
Algeria	50,000
Barbados	5,000
Egypt	700,000
Former Soviet Union (12) Russia, Byelarus, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Georgia	100,000
Lebanon	50,000
Slovenia	40,000
Sub-Saharan Africa (30) Angola, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia, Zanzibar, and Zimbabwe	400,000
Yemen	400,000
Total	1,745,000

Sales of wheat flour will be made to buyers in all countries announced today through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. For the former Soviet Union only, USDA also will allow sales to third-country buyers -- this will permit third-country purchasers of goods exported from the former Soviet Union to act as buyers for wheat flour destined for the former Soviet Union. The export sales will be facilitated with cash bonus payments. The subsidy will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in these markets.

EEP invitations for each of the countries or regions will be issued in the near future. For more information, call Richard Chavez (202) 720-5540, or L.T. McElvain, (202) 720-6211.

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Release No. 0597.93
Dennis Senft (510) 559-6068
Carol Childers (202) 720-9120

OVERNIGHT WEATHER POLL PREDICTS CROP THREATS AND WATER NEEDS

WASHINGTON, July 21--When phones ring in the middle of the night at weather stations throughout Colorado, no one panics. It's just Harold R. Duke's computer doing its overnight weather poll.

At his office, Duke routes the data via computer to two labs in his hometown of Fort Collins--one at Colorado State University working on threats to crops and the other in the U.S. Department of Agriculture analyzing water requirements for crops.

What the computer passes on to researchers is the raw data for predicting crop insect invasions or disease outbreaks to pinpointing irrigation water needs on Colorado farms. Duke says the computer-based forecasts can be adapted for use in other states.

Duke, an agricultural engineer for USDA's Agricultural Research Service, said the computer project is expected "to be as successful this year as it was in its debut last year." University colleagues tracked midsummer's high humidity last year and accurately forecast an explosive growth of a fungus that attacks onions. "Onion growers who followed the project's reports escaped without serious damage to their crop."

One of the reasons that Duke is optimistic about the computer forecasts paying off for farmers is that for the first time researchers are getting a database from the state's network of 22 weather stations. "Our data are statewide and uniform day after day--that's what is needed," he said.

"We get 25 kinds of data daily for such things as the previous day's high and low temperatures, wind, precipitation, soil temperature and minimum relative humidity," he said. Until last year, he added, scientists had to use data several days old, coming from only eight stations that didn't all collect the same types of information.

"A similar computer alert for crop pests and water use could be tailored to the needs of other states," he said. "What's critical is that the computer system get a wealth of uniform data on a steady basis from weather stations statewide."

Within Colorado, the weather stations feed data over phone lines into Duke's computer during a series of one-minute calls. His office computer is programmed to phone the network of 22 weather stations from 2 to 4 a.m.

By the time Duke arrives at work, his computer has already transferred the data to the university and ARS scientists. Each load it into computer programs developed for pest and water forecasts.

This year for the first time, the scientists' analyses and forecasts are available to about 1,000 farmers and 200 agribusiness people in Colorado who subscribe to market data services provided by private firms. On their computer screens, subscribers can view up-to-date reports captured on backyard satellite dishes.

Duke said the network can also be used to give growers a jump on potential infestations of insects such as corn earworm and western bean cutworm, in addition to diseases of onions and beans. University researchers see potential for expanding forecasts to cover all crops in the state.

Also, the system has potential for helping irrigators reduce water use by up to 30 percent, Duke said. This spring, Duke and colleagues entered the weather data into a computer program called SCHED that they developed to analyze the state's winter wheat and alfalfa crops. As the growing season unfolded, the researchers worked on water needs first for corn and sugarbeet fields, and then for bean crops.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For details contact Harold R. Duke, agricultural engineer, Water Management Research Unit, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, Fort Collins, Colo. 80523. Telephone (303) 491-8230.

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Release No. 0598.93
Kendra Pratt (301) 436-4898
Charles Hobbs (202) 720-4026

NEW YORK ERADICATES PSEUDORABIES; WASHINGTON UPGRADES STATUS

WASHINGTON, July 21--New York is now the fifth state to eradicate the livestock disease pseudorabies, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

"New Yorkers who helped to rid their livestock of this highly contagious virus should all be commended, " said Billy G. Johnson, deputy administrator of veterinary services in USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

New York joins Connecticut, Alaska, Maine and Utah in achieving Stage V or "Free" status in the five-stage state-federal-industry cooperative pseudorabies eradication program. Also, APHIS has accepted the recommendation of the National Pseudorabies Control Board to advance the state of Washington to Stage IV.

Johnson said states participating in the eradication program advance from Stage I to Stage V. Stage I is preparation. Stage II is control. Stage III is mandatory clean-up of all pseudorabies-infected herds. Stage IV is surveillance to make sure no infection remains. Stage V, pseudorabies-free status, is achieved if a state in Stage IV goes for one year without finding an infected swine herd.

Pseudorabies is a viral disease most prevalent in swine, often causing newborn piglets to die. Older pigs can survive infection and be carriers of the pseudorabies virus for life. Other animals, such as cattle, sheep, dogs and cats, can become infected. In species other than swine, pseudorabies can cause quick death. The virus does not cause human illness.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: The status of the various states in the pseudorabies eradication program is as follows:

Stage 1: Florida, Iowa, Maryland, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Vermont, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.
Stage 2: California, Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nebraska, Pennsylvania and South Dakota.
Stage 2/3: Michigan, Indiana, Minnesota and North Carolina.
Stage 3: Alabama, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Tennessee, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin.
Stage 4: Arizona, Arkansas, Hawaii, Mississippi, Montana, Idaho, New Mexico, New York, Washington, Oregon and Wyoming.
Stage 5: Alaska, Connecticut, Maine, New York and Utah.

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Release No. 0599.93
Doug Hendrix (301) 436-7253
Steve Lombardi (202) 720-4026

USDA ALLOWS COST-PER-HOUR FEES FOR STATE-ISSUED PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATES

WASHINGTON, July 21--The U.S. Department of Agriculture will allow states to use an alternative method for determining fees when issuing federal phytosanitary certificates for plants and unprocessed plant products intended for export. After Aug. 16, states may use a cost-per-hour charge for phytosanitary certification instead of the currently allowed cost-per-certificate charge.

"State agriculture officials issue almost half of all U.S. federal phytosanitary certificates," said B. Glen Lee, deputy administrator for plant protection and quarantine in USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. "By offering states an alternative for computing phytosanitary certificate costs, we

are providing them with a convenient way to recover their costs. Fees for APHIS-issued certificates will continue to be on a cost-per-certificate basis."

Many importing countries require federal phytosanitary certificates, which indicate that plants or plant products are free of pests and diseases that could threaten their agricultural production.

APHIS is primarily responsible for inspecting plant exports and issuing federal phytosanitary certificates, but states play a critical role in helping carry out this function. States provide phytosanitary certification at sites where APHIS field employees are not present, and exporters often bring their shipments to state agricultural offices to be inspected.

As with the cost-per-certificate system, states can include delivery, support, and administrative costs when they calculate a cost-per-hour fee for a phytosanitary certificate. Delivery costs include travel, per diem, transportation, employee salary benefits, and costs associated with maintaining field offices.

The new rule was published in the July 16 Federal Register and takes effect on Aug. 16.

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Release No. 0600.93
Kendra Pratt (301) 436-4898
Steve Lombardi (202) 720-4026

USDA PROPOSES TO REVISE IMPORTATION REQUIREMENTS FOR COOKED MEATS

WASHINGTON, July 21--The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to revise its regulations on the importation of cooked meat from countries where rinderpest or foot-and-mouth disease exist. The proposal would establish a new standard for testing whether meat has been "thoroughly cooked" so that certain products, such as ground meat, might be eligible to enter the United States.

"The proposal incorporates the latest technological advances to ensure that imported meat has been cooked sufficiently to inactivate both the rinderpest and the FMD viruses to prevent their introduction into the U.S. livestock population," said Billy G. Johnson, deputy administrator for veterinary services with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

The proposal would set standards for meat processing establishments in all affected countries and would specify acceptable cooking procedures; meat shipped to the United States must come only from establishments that meet these standards.

Notice of the proposal was published in the July 16 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before Sept. 14. An original and three copies of any written comments should refer to docket 92-007-1 and should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Comments may be inspected at USDA, Room 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

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Release No. 0601.93
Ed Curlett (301) 436-4446
Steve Lombardi (202) 720-4026

USDA ANNOUNCES NEW QUARANTINE REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPORTED PLANTS

WASHINGTON, July 21--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced that effective July 16, 1994, imported plants requiring quarantine upon entry into the United States may be imported only into states that have signed an agreement with the USDA.

"Post-entry quarantines protect U.S. agriculture by allowing enough time for manifestation of diseases that are not visible or identifiable on plants when they enter the country," said B. Glen Lee, deputy administrator of the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's plant protection and quarantine program. "These quarantines are a shared federal-state responsibility, and the agreements clarify each cooperator's role in the quarantine process."

Lee said the agreement standardizes involvement in inspection and monitoring activities, which currently vary by state. The regulations will ensure that the number or size of shipments allowed entry will not place an unmanageable burden on state inspectors.

The regulations also prohibit importers from reproducing plants grown in post-entry quarantine or moving them from the quarantine site without the written permission of an inspector.

The final rule was published in the July 16 Federal Register and takes effect one year from that date.

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Release No. 0602.93
Mary Dixon (202) 720-4623
Bonny Wolf (202) 720-7711

USDA PLANS TO DEBAR DAIRY CO-OP OVER SCHOOL MILK BID-RIGGING

WASHINGTON, July 21--The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced plans to debar Coble Dairy Products Cooperative Inc., of Lexington, N.C., after the company was found guilty of bid-rigging in the National School Lunch Program.

"We have taken the first step toward debarment of Coble Dairy," said Ellen Haas, assistant secretary of agriculture for food and consumer services. "This could prevent them from entering into new contracts to supply dairy products to school districts for up to three years." Coble would also be barred from entering into certain other contracts including federal nonprocurement programs governmentwide. Coble was notified today that USDA intends to debar the company.

Coble Inc. and Borden Inc., of Columbus, Ohio, pleaded guilty to charges of conspiring to rig bids for contracts to supply dairy products to school districts in several states. Borden pleaded guilty to such charges in Texas and Florida; and Coble did so in North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia.

USDA will not initiate debarment proceedings against Borden, Haas said. Unlike Coble, Borden has agreed to comply with specific standards of ethics, accountability and disclosure for three years. Should Borden fail to abide by the terms of the agreement, USDA may initiate debarment proceedings.

In February 1990, Borden pleaded guilty to participating in a conspiracy to rig school milk bids in Florida. In November of the same year, an administrative agreement with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) required Borden to implement certain safeguards. USDA's Food and Nutrition Service did not initiate debarment proceedings against Borden believing that the DLA administrative agreement adequately protects government and public interests. Debarment actions may not be used punitively but only to protect the government and public interest.

"We hope these actions will send a strong message to those who would defraud programs that millions of American children rely on for adequate nutrition," said Haas. "USDA has been seen in the past as not being aggressive enough in dealing with problems of bid-rigging. Today's announcement demonstrates USDA's commitment to maintain the integrity of its programs.

"We intend to go after companies that abuse our programs and debar or suspend those that we feel pose a continuing threat to program integrity. To do less would be unfair to both school children and taxpayers who depend on and support our programs."

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Release No. 0603.93
Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206
Marci Hilt (202) 720-4026

USDA SEEKS COMMENTS ON OILSEED PREVAILING WORLD PRICE CALCULATIONS

WASHINGTON, July 22 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation is seeking public comment on the calculation of prevailing world prices for soybeans and minor oilseeds, a USDA official said today.

According to the Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, producers can repay nonrecourse loans at a level that is the lesser of:

-- the loan level determined for the crop, or,

-- the prevailing world price for the applicable oilseed, adjusted for U.S. quality and location.

USDA proposes to calculate prevailing world prices for oilseeds based on prices for soybeans and minor oilseeds at major U.S. markets and, to the extent practical, to announce weekly the adjusted world price for each oilseed, said Randy Weber, acting executive vice president of the CCC.

This change from previous regulations is needed because timely and consistent data for foreign markets are not readily available, Weber said. The proposed method for calculating world prices for oilseeds would be similar to the method currently used for calculating the world prices for wheat and feed grains.

For the 1993 crop year, CCC has elected to allow oilseed loans to be repaid at a level, not in excess of the loan level for the crop, that will:

-- minimize potential loan forfeitures,

-- minimize the accumulation of oilseeds stocks by the federal government,

-- minimize the storage cost incurred by the federal government in storing oilseeds and,

-- allow oilseeds produced in the U.S. to be marketed freely and competitively.

Therefore, this proposed change will not affect the current method for calculating loan repayment rates for oilseed producers, Weber said.

The proposed regulations were published in the July 16 Federal Register. Comments must be submitted by August 16 to: Director, Oilseeds Analysis Division, Room 3739-S, USDA/ASCS, P.O. Box 2415, Washington, D.C., 20013-2415.

Comments will be available for public inspection in Room 3742, South Building, USDA, 14th and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., during normal business hours.

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Release No. 0604.93
Sally Klusaritz (202) 720-3448
Diane O'Connor (202) 720-4026

USDA ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL ALLOCATIONS FOR VEGETABLE OIL UNDER EEP

WASHINGTON, July 22--Under Secretary of Agriculture Eugene Moos today announced new vegetable oil allocations for Norway and Slovenia and an additional allocation for Algeria under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program.

With today's announcement, Norway is eligible for 40,000 metric tons, Slovenia 20,000 tons and Algeria 45,000 tons. These allocations will remain in effect through Sept. 30.

Sales of vegetable oil will be made to buyers in these countries through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. The export sales will be facilitated with cash bonus payments. The subsidy will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in these markets.

Invitations for each of the countries will be issued in the near future. For more information call Mark Rowse, (202) 720-5540, or L.T. McElvain, (202) 720-6211.

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Release No. 0606.93
Sally Klusaritz (202) 720-3448
Arthur Whitmore (202) 720-4026

USDA REVISES PUBLIC LAW 480 TITLE I ALLOCATIONS FOR FISCAL 1993

WASHINGTON, July 22--The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced revised country and commodity allocations for the fourth quarter of fiscal 1993 under Title I of the Food for Peace Program and the Food for Progress program funded under Title I appropriations.

Christopher E. Goldthwait, acting general sales manager for USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, said $415.8 million has been allocated for commodity loans and grants. An additional $46 million is being held in reserve to fund unforeseen needs during the fiscal year. These allocations do not necessarily represent final U.S. commitments with participating governments, Goldthwait said, because situations can develop that can cause a change in country and commodity allocations during the fiscal year.

Since the April revision of fiscal year 1993 allocations (USDA news release 0324.93), Bulgaria, Moldova, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Tunisia and Yemen have signed new agreements for Title I allocations. Funds previously allocated to Congo, Egypt, Latvia and Nigeria, and a portion of those allocated to Zimbabwe, have been returned to the unallocated reserve.

Title I of P.L. 480 is a concessional sales program to promote exports of agricultural commodities from the United States and to foster broad-based sustainable development in recipient countries. The program provides export financing over payment periods of 10 to 30 years, grace periods on payments of principal of up to 7 years, and low interest rates.

Countries eligible for the Title I program are those developing countries experiencing a shortage of foreign exchange earnings and having difficulty meeting all of their food needs through commercial channels. The factors that determine priorities for country allocations include food needs, potential for becoming a commercial U.S. market, and improvement of food security through agricultural projects and economic measures. The allocations take into account changing economic and foreign policy situations, market development opportunities, existence of adequate storage facilities and possible disincentives to local production.

The Food for Progress program is an independently authorized program that may be funded with Title I monies. This program is used to support countries that have made commitments to introduce or expand free enterprise elements in their agricultural economies. These changes involve commodity pricing, marketing, input availability, distribution and private sector involvement. Albania, Armenia, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan have signed agreements under this program.

For further information contact: Mary Chambliss, FAS, USDA, (202) 720-3573. Lists of countries and commodity allocations follow.

Fourth Quarter FY 1993 Public Law 480 Title I Country and Commodity Allocations

Country	$Mil. Total	Undesig-nated	Wheat/ Flour a/	Rice
	(Mil.$)	(Mil.$)	(-1,000 Metric Tons-)	
Belarus	5.0	-	-	-
Bulgaria	10.0	-	-	-
Costa Rica	15.0	-	90.0	-
Cote D'Ivoire	10.0	-	-	33.0
El Salvador	30.0	-	80.0	-
Guatemala	15.0	-	120.6	-
Jamaica	30.0	-	-	66.8
Jordan	30.0	-	200.0	-
Lithuania	25.0	-	-	-
Moldova	10.0	-	50.0	-
Morocco	20.0	-	66.0	-
Pakistan	40.0	-	-	-
Philippines	20.0	-	-	-
Romania	10.0	-	67.0	-
Sri Lanka	10.0	-	75.0	-
Suriname	3.5	-	24.0	-
Tajikistan	8.0	-	49.9	-
Tunisia	5.0	-	-	-
Turkmenistan	10.0	-	55.0	-

Ukraine	20.0	20.0	-	-
Yemen	5.0	-	-	20.0
Zimbabwe	5.0	-	-	-
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Subtotal	336.5	20.0	877.5	119.8

Continued: P.L. 480 Title I Allocations, 4th Quarter Fiscal 1993

Country	Feed Grains	Vegoil	Oilseeds Meals	Tallow
	(---1,000 Metric Tons---)			
Belarus	-	-	23.0	-
Bulgaria	100.0	-	-	-
Costa Rica	-	-	-	-
Cote D'Ivoire	-	-	-	-
El Salvador	-	-	28.7	36.0
Guatemala	-	-	-	-
Jamaica	125.0	-	-	-
Jordan	-	-	-	-
Lithuania	160.0	-	20.0	-
Moldova	-	-	-	-
Morocco	-	22.0	-	-
Pakistan	-	90.0	-	-
Philippines	-	-	95.0	-
Romania	-	-	-	-
Sri Lanka	-	-	-	-
Suriname	-	-	-	-
Tajikistan	-	-	-	-
Tunisia	50.0	-	-	-
Turkmenistan	-	-	-	-
Ukraine	-	-	-	-
Yemen	-	-	-	-
Zimbabwe	50.0	-	-	-
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Subtotal	485.0	112.0	166.7	36.0

Food for Progress Program

Country	$Mil. Total	Wheat/ Flour a/	Rice	Feed Grains	Vegoil	Oilseeds/ Meal	Tallow
	(Mil.$)	(------------1,000 Metric Tons------------)					
Albania	17.0 b/	40.0	17.0	-	-	-	-
Armenia	20.6 b/	50.4	27.0	-	-	-	-
Georgia	21.7 b/	94.0	-	-	-	-	-
Kyrgyzstan	20.0 b/	105.7	-	-	-	-	-
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	79.3	290.1	44.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Funding Summary ($Million) c/

	Loan Level	Budget Authority
Allocated Loans & Grants	$415.8	$295.1
Unallocated Reserve	94.2	46.9
Total Available for Loans & Grants	510.0	342.0

a/ Wheat flour included as grain equivalent.
b/ The country total includes transportation costs.
c/ The funding summary helps explain revised funding procedures for federal credit programs authorized by the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990, Title XIII of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990. These procedures, known as credit reform, require that budget authority for direct credit programs such as Title I represent the subsidy cost of the program. Subsidy costs are estimated based on repayment terms, interest subsidies and estimated risk of defaults. The Title I budget now includes two funding limitations: the $510 million available for loans and the $342 million available for budget authority to cover the estimated subsidy cost of the program. Neither limitation can be exceeded. The country program mix for $415.8 million of allocated loans and grants uses $295.1 million of the budget authority. Current country loan allocations of $415.8 million suggest a reserve of $94.2 million; however, the $46.9 million of unallocated budget authority will largely determine the value of commodities remaining to be purchased.

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Release No. 0607.93
Sally Klusaritz (202) 720-3448
Arthur Whitmore (202) 720-4026

ISRAEL ELIGIBLE FOR MORE BARLEY UNDER EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, July 22--Under Secretary of Agriculture Eugene Moos today announced an opportunity for sales of an additional 100,000 metric tons of U.S. barley to Israel under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program.

Sales of barley will be made to buyers in Israel through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. These sales will be facilitated through the payment of bonuses by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. The subsidy will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in the Israeli market.

This allocation will be valid until Sept. 30. Details of the program, including an invitation for offers from exporters, will be issued in the near future.

For more information call Janet M. Kavan, (202) 720-5540, or Larry McElvain, (202) 720-6211.

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Release No. 0608.93
Tom Amontree (202) 720-4623

USDA PRODUCES VIDEO ON ASSISTANCE FOR UPPER MIDWEST

WASHINGTON, July 22--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has produced a 20-minute video program which explains what USDA can do to help victims of recent heavy rains and flooding in the upper Midwest.

The video has been sent to TV stations, farm organizations and other interested groups in a seven-state area. It contains emergency information about food stamps and food safety as well as information on farm programs, emergency loans and other options available to help rebuilding efforts.

"We want to do everything possible to make sure farmers and ranchers who participate in farm programs have all the information they need on options available to them," Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy said. "The deadline to sign up for some program options is July 31. Information in this video can help farmers in deciding which options are suitable for them."

The USDA has taken numerous actions in the last two weeks to increase farm program flexibility in the rain-soaked areas. Also, Espy has visited the region several times, including twice with President Clinton, to view the damage firsthand and learn directly from the farmers the problems they face and the assistance they need. On July 14, Espy joined President Clinton in making a request to Congress for up to $900 million for immediate emergency agricultural assistance and $45 million for cleanup activities.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: The video "The Flood of '93 -- USDA Responds," will be available at 7:45 p.m. EDT, tonight, July 22, on Satellite Galaxy 6, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz, following USDA'S TV News weekly feed.

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Release No. 0609.93
Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623

FARM, AGRIBUSINESS, CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS TO APPEAR AT FARM INCOME FORUM

WASHINGTON, July 23--Leaders of major farm groups, agribusiness and Congress will join Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's open forum on farm income and agricultural policy here Aug. 2.

"American agriculture and agribusiness will face many new challenges as we enter the 21st century," said Espy. "We hope this forum will give us insights about how we can adapt our domestic and international policies and programs to meet those challenges. The distinguished panelists who will participate in our forum have many years of experience that should help us identify the changes needed in our programs to make them better serve American farmers, ranchers, processors and exporters."

Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont and Congressman Kika de la Garza of Texas will open the morning session, which will be devoted to issues addressing farm income and farm policy. Leahy is chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry; de la Garza is chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture.

Other participants in the farm income session include: Leland Swenson, president of the National Farmers Union; John White, Jr., American Farm Bureau Federation; Dolores Huerta, vice president and co-founder of the United Farm Workers of America; Elaine Stuhr, president of the Agricultural Women's Leadership Network; Alan Ott, federal legislative representative of the American Bankers Association.

Also participating are Ken Cook, president of the Environmental Working Group; Robert Frederick, legislative director of the National Grange; Robert Miller, president of the Intertribal Agricultural Council; Allen Rosenfeld, acting co-director of Public Voice for Food & Health Policy; Lynn Daft of Able, Daft and Early; David Freshwater, professor of economics at the University of Kentucky; and Donald McDowell, assistant professor for marketing and international development at North Carolina A&T State University.

U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor, Representative Timothy Penny of Minnesota, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Foreign Agriculture and Hunger, and Representative Cynthia McKinney of Georgia, a member of the House Agriculture Committee, will lead off the afternoon session which will address agricultural trade and development policy and export programs.

Other participants in the afternoon session include: Dwayne Andreas, president of Archer-Daniels-Midland; Ann Veneman, former deputy secretary of agriculture, now with Patton Boggs & Blow; Henry J. Voss, director of the California Department of Food and Agriculture; Steve McCoy, president of the North American Export Grain Association; Ken Hobbie, president of the Feed Grains Council; Richard Douglas, senior vice president of Sun-Diamond Growers of California; Carol Brookins, president of World

Perspectives; Charles Sykes, vice president of CARE; Joel Villalon, of South Texas Grain; and David Garst of Double G Ranch.

The forum, which is open to the public, will be held Monday, Aug. 2, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Jefferson Auditorium in USDA's South Building, on Independence Avenue between 12th and 14th Streets, S.W.

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Release No. 0610.93
Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623

ESPY URGES DAIRY PRODUCERS TO VOTE ON PROMOTION PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, July 23--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today urged dairy farmers to vote in the ongoing national referendum on the future of the National Dairy Promotion and Research Program.

"Dairy producers can now express their opinions on whether the National Dairy Promotion Program should continue," Espy said. "Every individual vote counts, and we'll be counting each ballot."

To date more than 10,000 ballots have been received. Ballots will be accepted through Aug. 16.

Espy recorded three public service announcements last month urging dairy farmers to vote in the referendum. With the Aug. 16 deadline for voting approaching, Espy strongly urged all dairy farmers to make a special effort to cast their ballots and send them in immediately.

Ballots have been distributed to most dairy farmers by their cooperatives or processors. However, ballots are also available at local Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices, or by calling USDA toll free at 1-800-745-5417.

The USDA announced the referendum in April of this year (USDA release no. 0303.93). All dairy farmers producing milk for commercial use during that month are eligible to vote. The program will continue if a majority of the producers voting in the referendum favor keeping the program.

The National Dairy Promotion and Research Program was authorized by Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983 to advance the position of milk in the marketplace. Dairy farmers finance the program with a 15-cent per hundredweight assessment on all milk produced and marketed commercially in the 48 contiguous states. A 36-member board appointed by the secretary of agriculture administers the program.

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Program Announcements-

Release No. 0596.93
Gene Rosera (202) 720-6734
Charles Hobbs (202) 720-4026

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES, MARKETING CERTIFICATE RATES

WASHINGTON, July 20--Under Secretary of Agriculture Eugene Moos today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

--long grain whole kernels:	6.75 cents per pound
--medium grain whole kernels:	6.06 cents per pound
--short grain whole kernels:	6.03 cents per pound
--broken kernels:	3.38 cents per pound

Based upon these milled rice world market prices, loan deficiency payment (LDP) rates, gains from repaying price support loans at the world market price, and marketing certificate rates are:

	Loan Gain and LDP Rate	Marketing Certificate Rate
	............$/Cwt.	....
--for long grain:	$2.03	$0.48
--for medium grain:	$1.84	$0.48
--for short grain:	$1.84	$0.49

These announced prices and rates are effective today at 3 p.m. EDT. The next scheduled price announcement will be made July 27 at 3 p.m. EDT.

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Release No. 0605.93
Janise Zygmont (202) 720-6734
Carol Childers (202) 720-9120

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATES FOR UPLAND COTTON

Washington, July 22--Randy Weber, acting executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment (CCA) in effect from 5:00 p.m. today through 3:59 p.m. July 29. The user marketing certificate payment rates announced today are in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 23 through midnight Thursday, July 29.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the AWP may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (USNE price) exceeds the NE price. The maximum allowable adjustment is the difference between the USNE price and the NE price.

A further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP may be made in accordance with this provision. The calculated AWP is 83 percent of the 1992 upland cotton base quality loan rate, and the USNE price exceeds the NE price by 3.53 cents per pound. Following are the relevant calculations:

I.	Calculated AWP	43.69	cents per pound
	1992 Base Loan Rate	52.35	cents per pound
	AWP as a Percent of Loan Rate	83	
II.	USNE Price	60.90	cents per pound
	NE Price	-57.37	cents per pound
	Maximum Adjustment Allowed	3.53	cents per pound

Based on a consideration of the U.S. share of world exports, the current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments, and other relevant data, no further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP will be made.

This week's AWP and coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price		
NE Price		57.37
Adjustments:		
Average U.S. spot market location	11.82	
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	1.55	
Average U.S. location	0.31	
Sum of Adjustments		- 13.68
Calculated AWP		43.69
Further AWP adjustment		- 0
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE		43.69 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment

NE Price	57.37
NE Coarse Count Price	- 53.32
	4.05
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton	- 3.95
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT...........................	0.10 cents/lb.

Because the AWP is below the 1991 and 1992 base quality loan rates of 50.77 and 52.35 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rate during this period is equal to the AWP, adjusted for the specific quality and location plus applicable interest and storage charges. The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

The USNE current price has exceeded the NE current price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks and the AWP has not exceeded 130 percent of the 1992 crop year base quality loan rate in any week of the 4-week period. As a result, the current user marketing certificate payment rate is 1.40 cents per pound. This rate is applicable during the Friday through Thursday period for bales opened by domestic users and for cotton contracts entered into by exporters for delivery prior to Sept. 30, 1993. Relevant data are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday through Thursday Period Ending	USNE Current Price	NE Current Price	USNE Current Minus NE Current	Current User Marketing Certificate Payment Rate 1/
		....	cents per pound	......	
1	July 1, 1993	58.70	57.19	1.51	0.26
2	July 8, 1993	58.15	56.81	1.34	0.09
3	July 15, 1993	60.20	58.07	2.13	0.88
4	July 22, 1993	61.20	58.55	2.65	1.40

1/ USNE current price minus NE current price minus 1.25 cents.

If the USNE forward price exceeds the NE forward price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks and the AWP does not exceed 130 percent of the 1993 crop year base quality loan rate in any week of the 4-week period, a forward user marketing certificate will be issued. As a result the forward user marketing certificate rate is 2.28 cents per pound. This rate is applicable during the Friday through Thursday period for cotton contracted by exporters for delivery after Sept. 30, 1993. Relevant data are summarized below:

Week	For Friday through Thursday Period Ending	USNE Forward Price	NE Forward Price	USNE Forward Minus NE Forward	Forward User Marketing Certificate Payment Rate 1/
		....	cents per pound	....	
1	July 1, 1993	58.20	56.50	1.70	0.45
2	July 8, 1993	57.85	56.12	1.73	0.48
3	July 15, 1993	59.75	57.09	2.66	1.41
4	July 22, 1993	60.90	57.37	3.53	2.28

1/ USNE forward price minus NE forward price minus 1.25 cents.

Next week's AWP, CCA and user marketing certificate payment rates will be announced on Thursday, July 29. Because the new marketing year begins on August 1, two AWPs and CCAs will be announced next Thursday.

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Fact Sheet-

Release No. 0612.93
Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623

USDA LISTS ACTIONS TO ASSIST FARMERS IN WATER-SOAKED MIDWEST STATES

Deadlines Approaching for Several Program Options

WASHINGTON, July 23--Cropland in several midwestern states has been severely impacted by recent heavy rains and flooding. Farmers have been unable to plant at all or have had crops fail because of the excessive rains and other weather-related problems. Estimates are that millions of acres of corn and soybeans in the region will be lost or negatively impacted due to record setting rainfall and flooding.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has taken numerous actions in the last two weeks to provide assistance to farmers and others in the rain-soaked areas. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy has visited the region several times, including twice with President Clinton, to view the damage firsthand and learn directly from the farmers the problems they face and the assistance they need.

In addition, on July 14, Espy joined President Clinton in making a request to Congress for up to $900 million for immediate emergency agricultural assistance and $45 million for cleanup activities.

Following is a summary of USDA's actions taken to date:

Farm Program Flexibility

July 6: (USDA release no. 0545.93)

** Waiver of Minimum Size and Width requirements. Producers will be permitted to designate small wet acres (minimum size .1 acre) as acreage conservation reserve (ACR) or conserving use (CU) acres. Currently, the minimum size is five acres. This will increase a producer's flexibility in dealing with abnormal conditions.

** Availability of 0/92 Program. Availability of 0/92 program for farmers who have enrolled in the farm program and have been prevented from planting or have failed acres. These farmers are eligible to participate in the 0/92 program. Producers will have until July 31 to select this program option.

** Extend time for Requesting Prevented Planting Credit. The prevented planting deadline will be extended. Producers will therefore have until July 31 to file a request for prevented planting credit. This action will provide farmers with additional time to make such a request.

** Extend Crop Reporting Dates. The reporting dates for spring seeded crops is being extended to July 31 in states affected by the unprecedented adverse weather conditions. The window of opportunity for producers to make program choices, such as the 0/92 program, is extended with this action.

** Flexibility in Refunds of Advanced Deficiency Payments. When producers are prevented from planting corn and opt out of the program to plant soybeans, advance deficiency payments will be due. Affected producers will be allowed to refund the unearned payments within 30 days or arrangements can be made to repay in installments at the lowest allowable interest rates. This action provides repayment under reasonable terms. A waiver of the refund of advance deficiency payments is prohibited by law.

July 14 (USDA release no. 0575.93):

** The USDA is in the process of amending the Farmer-Owned Reserve regulations to allow producers to enter the FOR who did not meet the earlier deadline of April 30. Producers with warehouse-stored FOR loans would be allowed to rotate warehouse loan collateral with farm-stored new crop production.

** Regulations are being amended to allow producers in disaster areas with 1992 wheat or feedgrain loans that mature in June, July or August the opportunity to request an extension of such loans to Sept. 30. Producers in disaster affected areas with 1992 soybean loans that mature in June, July or August would be given the opportunity to request a delay of settlement of such loans until Sept. 30.

** The ASCS has been directed to expeditiously handle requests in disaster affected areas for release of Conservation Reserve Program acreage for emergency haying and grazing on a county-by-county basis. This will allow producers who utilize their CRP acreage for haying or grazing to sell or rent for unrestricted use. The annual CRP payment will be reduced by 50 percent for the acreage hayed or grazed.

Emergency Loans

Farmers Home Administration: The Farmers Home Administration will make available emergency loans for physical losses and for production losses. FmHA will also make available loan guarantees. On July 13, Espy named counties in six midwestern states eligible for FmHA emergency loans because of crop losses due to heavy rains, flooding and other severe weather in the last few months (USDA release no. 0570.93). Since then, additional counties in those and other midwestern states have also been named eligible for FmHA emergency loans. (For latest information on eligible counties, contact your local FmHA office.)

Farmers in all counties named have eight months to apply for the loans to help cover part of their actual losses. To be eligible, they must have suffered a 30-percent loss of normal production, be able to repay the loan and any other loans, be unable to get credit elsewhere and have adequate security.

Rural Development Administration

Assistance from the Rural Development Administration will be made available in Presidential declared natural disasters. RDA can provide loan and grant assistance for water and waste disposal systems and business and industry purposes. The assistance is limited to the repair and rehabilitation of actual uninsured losses not covered by assistance from the Federal Emergency (USDA release no. 0545.93)

Emergency Food Stamps and Food Assistance

** **Illinois:** On July 13, USDA approved emergency food stamps for flood victims in 12 counties in Illinois (USDA release no. 0572.93). USDA's Food and Nutrition Service approved the state's application July 12, the same day it was received, allowing emergency food stamps to be issued for 14 days to people who may be temporarily eligible. Illinois is accepting applications for emergency food stamps through July 26. Eligible people receive their food stamps the day after they apply. They will receive a month's worth of benefits. To date, 1,151 households (3,587 people) have been certified to receive $330,778 disaster food stamp benefits.

To date, USDA has provided more than 137,000 pounds of commodities valued at more than $165,000 and arranged for shipment to Illinois warehouses to accommodate feeding efforts. Commodities included are infant formula, baby food, canned meat, peaches and pears.

** **Iowa:** USDA responded within hours to a July 16 request to implement the disaster food stamp program in 55 Iowa counties. To date, 870 households (2,578 people) received $232,418 in food stamp benefits.

Over 10 truckloads of USDA commodities, including mixed fruits, vegetables, meats, pasta and processed cheese, have been delivered to the Des Moines area.

** **Missouri:** So far, 4,889 households have received $1,637,801 in food stamp benefits.

**** South Dakota:** To date, USDA has provided 35 cases of food to South Dakota. Additional food requests are expected.

USDA is working with officials in other flooded states and is ready to quickly respond if they ask for emergency food stamps or commodity donations.

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